

(received via e-mail)

From: Janet Fiore
To: <smcconnell@waterboards.ca.gov>
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Subject: Support for the Rubicon Trail Cleanup and Abatement Order

We are expressing our strong support for the draft Cleanup and Abatement Order issued January 23, 2009 by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to the El Dorado County Department of Transportation--about time! I heard about this destruction a couple of years ago.

The destructive and unchecked off-road vehicle use greatly damages our land. The Board must act to stop increased erosion, soil compaction, and damage to plants and animals. We definitely support the Regional Board's effort to stop this destruction. It is long overdue.

The order is a positive first step in addressing the destructive off-road vehicle use that is degrading water quality and threatening both human and ecosystem health. Plus, there is the destruction of rare riparian habitat. This behavior is inherently both ignorant and violent. Likely, there is a link between this behavior and present or ultimate violent acting-out behavior in the public sphere.

Preventing these destructive and violent impacts is especially important because the lands surrounding the Rubicon include many of OUR national forest lands-- lands that belong to us and make up our national heritage. These areas are being irreparably damaged by destructive and violent off-roaders who refuse to stay on the trail and the failure of the Forest Service to implement and enforce regulations.

We support the adoption of the Order and expect that its adoption be complemented by closure of the Rubicon Trail. Even if the Regional Board wimps out and tries to claim that complete trail closure is not necessary, at minimum the trail should be closed to all wet season use and strictly limited to street-legal vehicles in order to minimize erosion and subsequent waterway sedimentation. Wet season use of these fragile areas is particularly damaging and contributes heavily to the sediment discharge and non-street-legal vehicles tend to cause greater damage than street-legal vehicles. These important interim measures will have immediate and noticeable benefits to the ecosystem and the water quality.

Off-road groups will blankly try to claim in a lying and openly ignorant manner that they can police themselves. That, of course, is bullshit and history proves them full of it. They will also whiningly come up with the excuse that the drastic environmental impacts of off-road vehicles can be mitigated by volunteer efforts. That is an open lie showing their total ignorance of ecosystems and their disregard for the public. Even their puny efforts to say they will pick up their own trash shows their ignorance. They are not just leaving trash; they are destroying, wantonly destroying. This is simply violence by another manner. Anyway, their alleged self-policing and volunteer efforts have proven ineffective in preventing environmental damage and illegal behavior in the past. Have they gone to classes or had counselling? Then, their violent behavior will not cease. We, the public, therefore, must regulate their violent behavior such that it can be controlled.

We happily commend the Regional Board and staff for your excellent assessment of the impacts on the Rubicon from off-road vehicle use and initiating the process needed to stop this damage. We also applaud you for finally taking action and ask that the draft Cleanup and Abatement Order be formally adopted.

Janet Fiore